

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

January 23, 2021

Jennifer A. Hemingway
Acting Senate Sergeant at Arms
U.S. Capitol
Room S-151
Washington, DC 20510

Timothy P. Blodgett
Acting House Sergeant at Arms
U.S. Capitol
Room H-124
Washington, DC 20510

Yogananda D. Pittman
Acting Chief of Police
United States Capitol Police
119 D Street, NE
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Acting Senate Sergeant at Arms Hemingway, Acting House Sergeant at Arms Blodgett, and Acting Chief of Police Pittman,

The unprecedented security situation from January 6 through the inauguration necessitated an emergency deployment of U.S. National Guard to the Capitol grounds. This rapid deployment understandably led to some early logistical confusion and adjustment with living arrangements for the National Guard stationed throughout the Capitol Complex. Yet, many of these brave servicemembers have now been deployed on Capitol Hill for several days, and it seems that their living standards have declined rather than improved.

On January 21, 2021, the day after the inauguration, it was reported that thousands of Guardsmen were abruptly ordered out of the very buildings they are here to defend and instead placed in parking garages or directed outside in the winter cold.¹ It was already disappointing and frustrating that some servicemembers were required to sleep on marble floors with no cots or sleeping bags, but this latest breach of faith was beyond the pale.

While it has since been reported that the situation was relatively short-lived and the Guardsmen have been allowed to return, the inadequate living and working conditions of the National Guard throughout the Capitol Complex are unacceptable.²

As President Biden's inauguration has thankfully passed without incident, and if no further threat remains, the National Guard should be allowed to return home to their families. Several governors have begun to call for a return of their state's National Guard units – unsurprising given the shoddy treatment they have received. If the National Guard's presence is still genuinely required for security reasons, we implore you to take every possible step to ensure they have comfortable housing accommodations, safe and sanitary conditions, and full access to all reasonable amenities such as cell phone charging stations.

Furthermore, we request an explanation as to what initiated the abrupt order that forced the National Guard outside and who made the decision. One media outlet has reported that the

¹ Seligman, L., Bertrand, N., & Desiderio, A. (2021, January 21). 'We feel incredibly betrayed': Thousands of Guardsmen forced to vacate Capitol. *Politico*. Retrieved January 22, 2021, from <https://www.politico.com/news/2021/01/21/national-guard-troops-vacate-capitol-461220>.

² Altman, H. (2021, January 22). National Guard troops kicked out of Senate are back in Capitol following outrage from lawmakers, public. *Military Times*. Retrieved January 22, 2021, from <https://www.militarytimes.com/news/your-military/2021/01/22/national-guard-troops-moved-to-a-cramped-parking-garage-complain-of-ingratitude-after-being-ordered-to-leave-out-of-capitol-building-they-came-to-protect/>.

move was due to a complaint from a Democratic Member of Congress.³ CBS News shared a comment from a National Guard Bureau spokesman who indicated the order came from U.S. Capitol Police.⁴ The Washington Post, meanwhile, reports that Capitol Police Acting Chief Yogananda Pittman said the order did not come from law enforcement. Whoever made this decision should be held accountable.⁵

We also request information on plans for how the National Guard will be accommodated during the remainder of their time in Washington and what role they will serve now that the inauguration has passed.

For as long as the National Guard remains, we volunteer our personal Washington, D.C. offices to be used as needed, whether for living accommodations or designated rest areas. Between the various buildings throughout the Capitol Complex and nearby hotels – not to mention the numerous military installations in the region – there is no excuse for soldiers to be forced into crowded and exhaust-filled garages or turned out into the dead of winter.

Due to the time sensitive nature of these concerns, we request that you respond by Wednesday, January 27, 2021.

Sincerely,



Jody Hice (GA-10)
Member of Congress



Troy Balderson (OH-12)
Member of Congress



Lauren Boebert (CO-03)
Member of Congress



Mike Bost (IL-12)
Member of Congress

³ Wong, K. (2021, January 21). National Guard forced to evacuate Capitol grounds after alleged mask complaint by Democrat Congressman. *Breitbart*. Retrieved January 22, 2021, from <https://www.breitbart.com/politics/2021/01/21/national-guard-forced-to-evacuate-capitol-grounds-after-alleged-mask-complaint-by-democrat-congressman/>.

⁴ Van Cleave, K. (2021, January 22). Capitol Police reverse request that National Guard members guarding Capitol rest in parking garage. *CBS News*. Retrieved January 22, 2021, from <https://www.cbsnews.com/news/national-guard-members-allowed-back-into-capitol/>.

⁵ Horton, A. (2021, January 22). National Guard members allowed back at Capitol after they were banished to a parking garage. *The Washington Post*. Retrieved January 22, 2021, from <https://www.washingtonpost.com/national-security/2021/01/21/national-guard-senate-garage/>.



Ted Budd (NC-13)
Member of Congress



Ken Calvert (CA-42)
Member of Congress



Madison Cawthorn (NC-11)
Member of Congress



Ben Cline (VA-06)
Member of Congress



Andrew Clyde (GA-09)
Member of Congress



Rick Crawford (AR-01)
Member of Congress



Neal P. Dunn, M.D. (FL-02)
Member of Congress



Ron Estes (KS-04)
Member of Congress



Andrew Garbarino (NY-02)
Member of Congress



Mike Garcia (CA-25)
Member of Congress



Bob Good (VA-05)
Member of Congress



Lance Gooden (TX-05)
Member of Congress



Glenn Grothman (WI-06)
Member of Congress



Andy Harris, M.D. (MD-01)
Member of Congress



Kevin Hern (OK-1)
Member of Congress



Darrell Issa (CA-50)
Member of Congress



Ronny Jackson (TX-13)
Member of Congress



Bill Johnson (OH-06)
Member of Congress



Dusty Johnson (SD-AL)
Member of Congress



Fred Keller (PA-12)
Member of Congress



Barry Loudermilk (GA-11)
Member of Congress



Nicole Malliotakis (NY-11)
Member of Congress



David B. McKinley, P.E. (WV-01)
Member of Congress



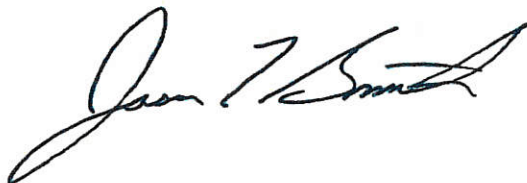
Mary Miller (IL-15)
Member of Congress



Barry Moore (AL-02)
Member of Congress



Austin Scott (GA-08)
Member of Congress



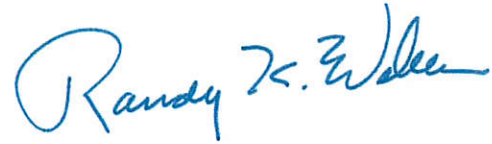
Jason Smith (MO-08)
Member of Congress



W. Gregory Steube (FL-17)
Member of Congress

A stylized, handwritten signature in blue ink, likely belonging to David G. Valadao. The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first letter being a large 'D'.

David G. Valadao (CA-21)
Member of Congress

A handwritten signature in blue ink, clearly legible as 'Randy K. Weber'. The signature is written in a cursive style.

Randy K. Weber (TX-14)
Member of Congress

CC: Majority Leader Chuck Schumer, Minority Leader Mitch McConnell, Speaker of the House
Nancy Pelosi, and Minority Leader Kevin McCarthy